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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM: AMCONGEN, Lagos.

TO: THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

DESP. NO. 201

DATE: February 24, 1953

REF:

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SUBJECT: Fortnightly Newsletter - February 9 - 21, 1953.

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POLITICAL

Eastern Region Stalemate Continues

Government in Eastern Region still limping along in face of continued stalemate of legislature by NCNC-provoked ministerial situation. Six ministers who resigned and later withdrew resignations still not accepted by NCNC House members, new ministers not appointed as Lt.-Governor maintains that six still hold portfolios. Budget not yet voted by House, no other bills considered. NCNC members refused take part in secret no-confidence vote on six ministers. Walked out of House leaving but 32 members to vote on motion. 32 members voted down no-confidence resolution. NCNC refuses accept this; will not participate in vote by full House. Lt.-Governor can put any legislation he holds essential into effect but no indication yet whether will or not.

Widespread opinion that NCNC afraid let full House vote in secret on no-confidence motion. Many observers convinced many nominal AZIKIWE supporters would vote against his group in secret ballot. NCNC press pounding point that situation is British imperialism vs. Nigerian nationalism. Announced resignations from NCNC continue daily. So-called "Cameroons bloc" maintain loyalty to NCNC party but state they have no confidence in party Executive. Eyo ITA and Chuku NWAPA emerging as leaders opposition to NCNC.

NCNC party member brings suit in Abakaliki court against two of recalcitrant Ministers for "illegal" possession portfolio. Case adjourned by court.

Northern Region Ministries Reshuffled

Creation of new Ministry of Local Government shifts Minister of Works, Malam Ahamadu (Sardauna of Sokoto) to Minister of Local Government; Malam Bello KANO, Minister of Community Development to Works; Mr. Peter ACHIMUGU, Minister of Local Industries to the additional

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the additional duties of Minister of ural Resources; and the Waziri of Bornu becomes Minister wit ortfolio.

New Ministry of Local Government , ably only partially effective since powers of Minister are almost exclusively advisory.

Northern House of Chiefs Opens Budget Session

Lieutenant Governor, Sir Bryan SHARWOOD-SMITH, congratulated Northern Chiefs on their wisdom in "not only accepting but stimulating more effective chain of elective representation of the people and also the delagation of powers to subordinate level." at opening of budget session on February 10 at Kaduna.

Minister of Labor Visits Fernando Po

Nigerian Minister of Labor, Hon. S. L. A. AKINTOLA, visited island of Fernando Po to survey working conditions Nigerian contract laborers there. Said conditions not nearly as bad as nationalist press had always said. Improvements of contract conditions will be discussed with Spanish Government.

Lagos Caretaker Town Council Faces Taxi Strike

Lagos taxi drivers out on strike against new regulations imposed by interim governing commission Lagos. Drivers object to rules calling for rotation in use cab stands, wearing of badges, and requiring literacy tests for drivers. Little hope for success of strike. Lagos drivers relieved at absence taxis from already-crowded streets. Little sympathy for taxi drivers as regulations appear reasonable. NCNC press gleefully charging Commission as "Action Group council" with unreasonable lawmaking.

ECONOMIC

American-Nigerian Building Firm Established

Afamaco Construction Company announces its opining for February 25, 1953. Company formed by Robert J. NASH (American), William B. P. GRAY (American), and Jaiye MAJA (Nigerian). Maja received part of construction engineering training in U. S.

Nigeria and Cameroons Cocoa Estimated at 95-100,000 Long Tons

Government estimates 1952/53 cocoa crop for Nigeria and British Cameroons will be between 95 and 100 thousand tons. Private sources estimate crop at 95 thousand. Ibadan region production down considerably but more cocoa from East this year. CONGEN's Economic Reporting Officer feels crop will be nearer 95 thousand than 100 thousand. Figures only estimates--accurate forecast not possible.

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--accurate forecast not possible.

Erwin P. Keeler
American Consul General

NARA Date 7-30